



PATENT
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)	
)	
Michio TADA, et al.)	Confirmation No.: 9219
)	
Application No.: 10/657,130)	Group Art Unit: 3653
)	
Filed: September 9, 2003)	Examiner: T. Morrison
)	
For: SHEET TRANSPORTING APPARATUS)	
AND SHEET PROCESSING APPARATUS))	
USING THE SAME)	

Customer Window, Mail Stop Amendment

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Sir:

AMENDMENT AND REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION
UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111

In response to the Non-Final Office Action dated July 29, 2005, the period of response to which extends through September 29, 2005, and in response to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment dated September 15, 2006, the period for response to which extends through October 15, 2006, please amend the above identified application as follows:



IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A sheet transporting apparatus, comprising:

a sheet transportation path;

a predetermined number of transport members disposed in [a] the sheet transportation path;

a side position regulating mechanism which regulates a position of a side edge of a sheet in the sheet transportation path, the side position regulating mechanism having a reference member configured to change a sheet regulation position;

a base member on which at least the reference member is mounted;

a first adjusting mechanism which adjusts a position of the reference member; and

a second adjusting mechanism which adjusts a position of [a] the base member.

Claim 2 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the side position regulating mechanism includes a side guide disposed on a side of the sheet transportation path and correspondingly with the side edge position of the sheet and a skew member which skew-transport the sheet toward the side guide.

Claim 3 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the side position regulating mechanism comprises: at least two position sensors

which are disposed correspondingly with the side edge position of the sheet; and a shift transportation roll which nip-transport the sheet, and which is movable perpendicularly to a transportation direction of the sheet.

Claim 4 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first adjusting mechanism or the second adjusting mechanism can adjust the sheet regulation position of the side position regulating mechanism, in one or both of manual and automatic manners.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein one of the first adjusting mechanism and the second adjusting mechanism can perform the adjustment by a coarse adjustment step, and the other can perform the adjustment by a fine adjustment step adjustment by a fine adjustment step and a coarse adjustment step, respectively.

Claim 6 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 5, wherein, among the first adjusting mechanism and the second adjusting mechanism, an operation for the fine adjustment step is linked with an operation for the coarse adjustment step.

Claim 7 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the sheet position regulation by the side position regulating mechanism is performed while combinedly using the first adjusting mechanism and the second adjusting

mechanism.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first adjusting mechanism supports the reference member swingably around a first swing fulcrum with respect to the base member.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second adjusting mechanism supports the base member swingably around a second swing fulcrum.

Claim 10 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first adjusting mechanism includes a drive source and a driving transmitting mechanism; and

the drive source is coupled to the reference member via the driving transmitting mechanism.

Claim 11 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second adjusting mechanism includes a drive source and a driving transmitting mechanism; and

the drive source is coupled to the base member via the driving transmitting mechanism.

Claim 12 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising: a controlling device which controls the first adjusting mechanism and the second adjusting mechanism.

Claim 13 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 11, wherein, in accordance with usage conditions of the sheet, the controlling device adjusts at least one of the first adjusting mechanism and the second adjusting mechanism.

Claim 14 (Original): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 11, wherein a direction of a sheet transportation face is used as a sheet usage condition.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn): A sheet transporting apparatus which transports a sheet to a processing section via a sheet transportation path, comprising:

a sheet aligning mechanism which aligns a transportation posture of the sheet transported toward the processing section;

wherein the sheet aligning mechanism includes an adjusting mechanism which automatically adjusts the transportation posture of the sheet in accordance with a deformation degree of the sheet.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 15,

wherein, when the sheet processing section is to apply a reprocess on a rear face of a sheet in which a front face has been processed, the adjusting mechanism automatically adjusts the transportation posture of the sheet in accordance with the deformation degree of the sheet.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising: a controlling device which controls the adjusting mechanism;

wherein the sheet deformation degree is previously supplied to the controlling device.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising: a controlling device which controls the adjusting mechanism and which includes a measuring section that measures the sheet deformation degree.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A sheet processing apparatus, comprising:

a sheet transportation path;

a sheet processing section disposed in [a] the sheet transportation path;

a predetermined number of transport members disposed in [a] the sheet transportation path;

a side position regulating mechanism which regulates a position of a side edge of a sheet in the sheet transportation path, the side position regulating mechanism having a reference member configured to change a sheet regulation position;

a base member on which at least the reference member is mounted;

a first adjusting mechanism which adjusts a position of the reference member; and

a second adjusting mechanism which adjusts a position of [a] the base member.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): A sheet processing apparatus, comprising:

a sheet transportation path;

a sheet processing section disposed in a sheet transportation path; and

a sheet aligning mechanism which aligns a transportation posture of the sheet transported toward the processing section;

wherein the sheet aligning mechanism includes an adjusting mechanism which automatically adjusts the transportation posture of the sheet in accordance with a deformation degree of the sheet.

Claim 21 (New): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the driving transmitting mechanism includes a plurality of bevel gears connected to a drive transmission shaft oriented perpendicular to the shaft of the drive source, an eccentric cam is positioned on the drive transmission shaft and butts a cam follower to convert rotational movement of the eccentric cam and cam follower into a swingable movement of the reference member around a first swing fulcrum with respect to the base member.

Claim 22 (New): The sheet transporting apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the driving transmitting mechanism includes a plurality of gears connected to a drive transmission shaft oriented parallel to the shaft of the drive source, an eccentric cam positioned on the drive transmission shaft abuts a cam follower positioned on an engagement pin and converts rotational

movement of the eccentric cam and cam follower into a swingable movement of the base member around a second swing fulcrum.

REMARKS**Summary of the Office Action**

In the Office Action, the drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a).

Claims 1-14 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1, 4-7, 9-13, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Japanese Publication No. 4-7264 (hereinafter “JP-‘264”).

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants amend claims 1, 5, 8-9, and 19 and add claims 21 and 22. Accordingly, claims 1-14, 19, and 21-22 are pending for further consideration.

Drawings

To overcome the Office Action’s objection of the drawings, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner’s attention to FIGS. 20 and 21 and page 37, line 11 through page 39, line 7 of the specification. Applicants respectfully submit that there is ample support for “two position sensors which are disposed correspondingly with the side edge position of the sheet; and a shift transportation roll which nip-transport the sheet, and which is movable perpendicularly to a transportation direction of the sheet,” features of claim 3 in the drawings and specification as originally filed. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the drawings be removed.

All Subject Matter Complies with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-14 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claims 1, 5, 8-9, and 19 have been amended to address the alleged ambiguities pointed out by the Examiner in the June 29, 2005 Office Action. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of claims 1-2, 5, 8-9, 11, and 19 are respectfully traversed in light of the current amendments to claims 1, 5, 8-9, and 19.

With regard to claims 4 and 6-7 and 13-14, Applicants respectfully submit that there is sufficient structure recited in the claims to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Furthermore, there is ample support for the claims as shown in Figs. 1-21 and pages 3-40 of the specification.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that all rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 4-7, 9-13, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Hiwasa et al. (*JP- '264*). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action has not established that *JP- '264* anticipates each and every feature of Applicants' claimed invention and that all rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn. Namely, Applicants contend that independent claims 1 and 19 recite the feature of "a side position regulating mechanism which regulates a position of a side edge of a sheet in the sheet transportation path, the side position regulating mechanism having a reference member configured to change a sheet regulation position; a base member on which at least the reference member is mounted; a first adjusting mechanism which adjusts a

position of the reference member; and a second adjusting mechanism which adjusts a position of the base member.” At least these features are not disclosed or taught by *JP- '264*.

JP- '264 discloses a sheet discharge table for an imaging apparatus. The purpose of the sheet discharge table is to align and sort sheets using at least two sheet position restraining members of a simple structure by synchronizing the swing motion of a sheet discharge table with the motion of the position restraining members. See the Abstract of *JP- '264*. However, *JP- '264* fails to teach or suggest at least the above features of claims 1 and 19.

The Office Action states that *JP- '264* discloses “a side position regulating mechanism (including 8a, 8b, 21)” and the Office Action identifies the “reference member [as] (including 8a, 8b, 21).” The Office Action does not distinguish that the reference member items are a subset of the side position regulating mechanism and does not identify features beyond 8a, 8b, and 21, which is actually one rod bent into 3 sections, that are part of a mechanism. See FIG. 1 of *JP- '264*. That is, no assortment of components is identified as a mechanism.

Further, the Office Action does not distinguish between the first adjusting mechanism and the second adjusting mechanism. The Office Action states that FIG. 3 shows both the first and second adjusting mechanisms which adjust the reference member (8a, 8b, 21) and the base member 2, respectively. There is no support for this assertion in *JP- '264* and both the first and second adjusting mechanisms cannot be the same exact structure as alleged in the Office Action. Because *JP- '264* does not disclose the all the features of independent claims 1 and 19, it cannot anticipate the present invention.

As pointed out in MPEP § 2131, a claim is anticipated by a prior art reference only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of*

California, 2 USPQ2d 1051 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Therefore, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn because *JP- '264* does not teach or suggest each feature of independent claims 1 and 19.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 4-7 and 9-13 are also allowable insofar as they recite the patentable combinations of features recited in claim 1, as well as reciting additional features that further distinguish over the applied prior art.

Additionally, new dependent claims 21 and 22 are also allowable in so far as they recite the patentable combination of features recited in independent claim 1 and as well as reciting additional features that further distinguish over the applied prior art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of the response, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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